

Message Text

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ORIGIN H-01

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA IMMEDIATE
INFO USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BONN

S E C R E T STATE 125957

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, CY, TU, GR

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON THE TURKISH ARMS EMBARGO

1. THE SECRETARY, AT THE REQUEST OF CONGRESSMEN ZABLOCKI (D-WIS.) AND BROOMFIELD (R-MICH.), ORGANIZED A BREAKFAST MEETING MAY 17 WITH TURKISH AMBASSADOR ESENBEL TO DISCUSS THE CURRENT CONGRESSIONAL SITUATION WITH RESPECT TO THE ADMINISTRATION'S EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN PROGRAM. OTHERS

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ATTENDING THE BREAKFAST WERE CONGRESSMEN LEE HAMILTON (D-IND.), STEPHEN SOLARZ (D-N.Y.), PAUL FINDLEY (R-ILL.), THE DEPUTY SECRETARY AND LEDSKY OF H.

2. THE CONGRESSMEN EXPLAINED THAT THEY HAD LED THE BATTLE IN THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE (HIRC) TO LIFT THE TURKISH EMBARGO, BUT THAT DESPITE THEIR OWN BEST

EFFORTS AND THAT OF THE ADMINISTRATION, ONLY A ONE VOTE VICTORY HAD BEEN POSSIBLE -- AND THAT ONLY BECAUSE TWO MEMBERS HAD BEEN ABSENT. THE FIVE PLEDGED TO CONTINUE THEIR EFFORTS ON THE HOUSE FLOOR IN WHAT THEY DESCRIBED AS AN UP-HILL BUT WINNABLE BATTLE. IN A SITUATION AS DELICATE AS THIS, THE FIVE EMPHASIZED THAT ANY WRONG STEP BY THE TURKS COULD TIP THE SCALES AGAINST THE ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM, WHILE POSITIVE TURKISH MOVES WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BE NECESSARY TO PROVIDE THE MARGIN OF VICTORY.

3. SEVERAL OF THE CONGRESSMEN EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT MEETING AS MANY LEGISLATORS AS POSSIBLE WHEN HE COMES TO WASHINGTON. CHAIRMAN ZABLOCKI NOTED THAT HE AND HIS COMMITTEE WOULD HOST A MID-MORNING MEETING WITH ECEVIT ON JUNE 1 AND THE SECRETARY REMINDED ESENBEL THAT THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE HAD EXTENDED A SIMILAR INVITATION FOR A MID-AFTERNOON RECEPTION ON JUNE 5. ESENBEL EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT ECEVIT WOULD RETURN TO WASHINGTON FROM NEW YORK ON JUNE 5. ALL FIVE CONGRESSMEN AT THE TABLE SUGGESTED THAT THIS WOULD BE A SERIOUS MISTAKE ON ECEVIT'S PART.

4. CONGRESSMAN HAMILTON THEN TURNED THE CONVERSATION TO POSSIBLE ACTIONS THE TURKS MIGHT TAKE BETWEEN NOW AND THE HOUSE AND SENATE FLOOR VOTE TO DEMONSTRATE FLEXIBILITY ON CYPRUS. HE MADE FOUR SUGGESTIONS: (A) A FURTHER
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SUBSTANTIAL TROOP WITHDRAWAL FROM CYPRUS, CITING 5,000 AS A DESIRABLE FIGURE. (B) AN INDICATION THAT A SIZEABLE NUMBER OF GREEK-CYPRIOI REFUGEES MIGHT RETURN TO NEW FAMAGUSTA IN THE NEAR FUTURE. (C) A TURKISH OFFER TO REOPEN NICOSIA AIRPORT. (D) REOPENING THE EAST/WEST HIGHWAY ACROSS CYPRUS.

5. ESENBEL RESPONDED TO EACH OF THESE POINTS WITH STANDARD ARGUMENTS. FURTHER TROOP WITHDRAWALS COULD NOT BE ENTER-TAINED UNTIL THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS WAS UNDERWAY AND WOULD BE DIFFICULT IN ANY CASE GIVEN THE FACT THAT THE GREEK CYPRIOTS HAD APPROXIMATELY 20,000 MEN UNDER ARMS AND WERE GETTING READY FOR "GUERRILLA WARFARE". A FORTHCOMING PROPOSAL ON NEW FAMAGUSTA HAD ALREADY BEEN OFFERED AND ESENBEL REMINDED THE CONGRESSMEN THAT THE TURKS HAD MADE A PROPOSAL TO REOPEN THE NICOSIA AIRPORT ON A SHARED BASIS IN 1975. ESENBEL NOTED THAT MANY OF THESE POINTS HAD BEEN TOUCHED ON BY PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE IN BONN ON MAY 11.

6. CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ EXPLAINED THAT THE SPECIFICS OF TURKEY'S PROPOSALS WERE NOT WELL UNDERSTOOD IN WASHINGTON.

EVEN PEOPLE LIKE HIMSELF WHO TRIED TO FOLLOW THE ISSUE CLOSELY WERE OFTEN CONFUSED. HE NOTED THAT HE HAD SPOKEN TO PROFESSOR SOYZAL SEVERAL WEEKS AGO AND THAT SOYZAL HAD PROMISED TO SEND HIM DOCUMENTS OUTLINING THE TURKISH OFFER TO LET GREEK-CYPRIOI REFUGEES RETURN TO NEW FAMAGUSTA AND ALLOW NICOSIA AIRPORT TO BE REOPENED. WHEN THESE DOCUMENTS ARRIVED THE FAMAGUSTA OFFER RELATED ONLY TO OWNERS OF HOTELS AND THE AIRPORT OFFER PERTAINED ONLY TO UN AND NOT GENERAL CIVILIAN FLIGHTS. FURTHER CLARITY WAS NEEDED.

7. CONGRESSMAN ZABLOCKI SUGGESTED THAT A LETTER MIGHT BE ADDRESSED TO THE HIRC EXPLAINING MORE FULLY THE TURKISH POSITION IN EACH OF THESE AREAS. THE DEPUTY SECRETARY ADDED THAT IT WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL IF SUCH A PAPER COULD
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BE SHOWN IN ADVANCE TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO ENSURE THAT THE PAPER WAS PHRASED IN A WAY THAT DID US THE MOST GOOD ON THE HILL.

8. ESENBEL AGREED TO CONVEY THESE REQUESTS TO HIS GOVERNMENT. HE WAS NOT SURE THAT ANKARA WOULD AGREE TO A LETTER SINCE THIS WOULD AGAIN RAISE THE LINKAGE ISSUE BY INVOLVING TURKEY AND THE CONGRESS DIRECTLY IN A DISCUSSION OF THE CYPRUS ISSUE. HE THOUGHT SOME KIND OF STATEMENT FROM THE TURKISH EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON MIGHT BE POSSIBLE AND HE INDICATED, ONCE HE RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS FROM ANKARA, HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE TEXT OF ANY COMMUNICATION IN ADVANCE WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT.

9. THE BREAKFAST MEETING ENDED ON AN AMICABLE NOTE WITH CHAIRMAN ZABLOCKI INDICATING THAT HE FELT AGAIN WE WERE WORKING TOGETHER TOWARD A COMMON GOAL AND THAT OUR JOINT COOPERATIVE EFFORT WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL IN THE HOUSE. VANCE

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